ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM
MASTERPLAN

November 13, 2025

Produced by Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum (RGVRRM) in collaboration with the Community Design Rochester (CDR).

LEHIGH VALLEY
95100
CONRAIL
NYC 1273

Acknowledgements

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we are on traditional territory of the Onöndowa'ga' or "the people of the Great Hill." In English, they are known as Seneca people, "the keeper of the western door." They are one of the six nations that make up the sovereign Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We strive to honor as well as respect the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to these lands with gratitude for the land itself and the peoples who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

RGVRRM Acknowledgement

We are delighted to present this document on the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum Design Workshop held on July 12, 2024. The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum is home to the largest collection of historic trains as well as the only operating railroad museum in New York State.

The Design Workshop highlights the deep commitment of the individuals past and present who are dedicated to preserving and promoting Rochester's, railroad heritage.

The preparation for this document provided an opportunity to look back at eighty years of preserving Rochester's rail heritage with a focus on how to take this museum into the future in regards to accessibility and sustainability.

Workshop Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that the transcribed focus group notes included in this document were written directly by the community members who attended the workshop. Their comments, ideas, and strategies reflect their own perspectives and experiences, and may or may not fully align with the goals or priorities of RGVRRM. We have preserved their words as they were shared, without alteration, in recognition of the value of their voices and contributions to the conversation.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 2

Introduction & History 3

Project Objective 5

Existing Museum Campus 5

Focus Area Map 7

Site Conditions & Focus Areas 8

RGVRRM Organizational Chart 9

Guiding Principles & Agenda 11

- Focus Group 1 12
- Focus Group 1A 13
- Focus Group 2 14
- Focus Group 2A 16
- Focus Group 3 17
- Focus Group 4 19
- Focus Group 5 20

Findings and Recommendations 21

- Museum Entrance Pavilion- Layout Options 22
- Museum Entrance Pavilion- Precedent Images 23

Proposed Site Master Plan 27

Implementation Matrix & Campus Improvements 28

Appendices 29

Introduction & History: Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

Celebrating 80 Years of Preserving Rochester's Rich Railroading Heritage!

Attendees of the 9th Annual NRHS National Convention pose at the Baltimore & Ohio station on Main Street on September 3, 1949.

The organization can trace its roots back to February 4, 1937, when a small group of rail enthusiasts met on the second floor of the old New York Central station on Central Avenue to celebrate their membership as the newly formed sixth chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. Much is owed to those ten original members.

Just 12 years later, the Rochester Chapter had grown in size and recognition. Rochester was chosen as the site of the 9th Annual NRHS National Convention. Over the long weekend of September 3 through 4, 1949, NRHS members from all over the country convened at the Hotel Rochester for their annual meeting, grand banquet, and rail excursions. For this significant occasion, members proudly displayed their collections of railroad memorabilia in the hotel lobby. Large display cases were filled with exhibits of railroad lanterns, detailed models, photographs, and all types of associated railroad books and literature.

On September 3, 1949, an eager crowd of rail fans gathered under the sheds of the Baltimore & Ohio (former Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh Ry.) terminal off West Main Street for an excursion to East Salamanca, N.Y., and return. Among the attendees were long-time members Bill Gordon, Dick Tickner, Bill Chapin, Sam Grover, Ed Van Leer, and Curt Boyer. On September 5, more than 65 attendees boarded two chartered trolleys at City Hall Station for a complete end-to-end tour of the Rochester Subway. The convention was declared a complete success by all reports.

Through the 1950s, several excursions were operated on the B&O and Erie lines during the waning days of steam locomotives in cooperation with the nearby Buffalo Chapter NRHS. One of these trips on the B&O was documented in the short documentary film The Vanishing American produced by the Kodak Camera Club, with the original print in the museum collection.

By the 1960s, our headquarters moved to a location on South Avenue (now occupied by the Convention Center), as the old NYC station had been sold to new owners. Members of our organization became involved in the operation of steam excursions on the new Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad that started up on the old Erie line in 1965. Regular steam excursions on the Canadian National just across the border in Fort Erie and Hamilton, Ont., were also a big draw. The search for a permanent location to establish a railroad museum began in the mid-1960s. Several locations were considered, including the former B&O station in Mumford.

A pivotal point in the organization's history was the purchase of the 1909 wood frame depot at Industry from the Erie Lackawanna Railroad for $1.00 in July 1971. The herculean task of renovating the old depot would take several years to complete, including excavating furnace ashes and mud from the basement, replacing the main floor beam, and repairing the roof.

As the collection of historic railroad equipment continued to grow, it became clear we would need to restore a connection that would allow our museum to have a live rail connection to the outside world. With the permission of Conrail, several dozen volunteers worked through the weekend of August 7 through 9, 1981, to reinstall a switch that would connect to the

display tracks being built on the property.
This work was completed none too soon, as Eastman Kodak Co. had just donated a retired diesel locomotive to our museum. On August 15, GE 80-ton switcher EK 6 arrived at Industry, having traveled on live rail all the way from the Kodak plant. Kodak's first diesel (built new in 1946) in turn became our museum's first locomotive.
Additional track construction continued off and on for another ten years, including the expansion of the display yard at Industry Depot. On June 12, 1993, museum members celebrated with a "golden spike" ceremony celebrating the completion of a two-mile link with the New York Museum of Transportation. Public track car rides between the two museums began shortly thereafter, bringing a steady stream of Sunday visitors to both locations.

As the the 25th anniversary of the establishment of our museum at Industry in 1996, a major fundraising campaign was announced to fund the construction of a new restoration shop. Ground was broken on the new facility in 1998. By 2000, the structure was completed and electrical service connected. Tracks were laid into the structure, and some of the first pieces were placed inside the shop, including the newly-returned Rochester Subway Car 60.

The annual fall foliage excursions came to an end in 2004 and the coaches were placed in storage on the Ontario Midland at Newark, N.Y. In December 2007, the set of Empire State Express coaches were delivered from Sodus to Industry, and spotted in the newly built Upper Yard leading into the Restoration Shop. In 2012, the coaches were moved to newly completed siding on the west side of the LA&L tracks that run past the museum. Volunteers prepared the coaches for their first trip, a special end-to-end rare mileage excursion on the LA&L from Lakeville to

Introduction & History: Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

Mortimer and return By the end of 2010, the museum chose a path independent of membership in the NRHS.

In 2015, museum campus expanded by opening the Upper Yard to the public for the first time. Expanded parking facilities were created, and many new museum displays were installed. New York Central caboose was returned to service to carry the dramatic increase in visitors.

The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum is home to the largest collection of historic trains, as well as the only operating railroad museum in New York State. With this distinction comes its own challenges for volunteers to meet as we continue to expand and grow!

Project Objective

In March 2024, the officers and board of directors of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum (RGVRRM) reached out to the Community Design Center Rochester (CDR) to discuss the creation of a comprehensive master plan for their museum campus in the Town of Rush. For over 50 years, the RGVRRM has been a labor of love, run entirely by volunteers at its historic 'Industry' site. Now, with a forward-thinking vision for the next half-century, the organization is preparing to embark on an exciting new chapter.

The master plan is more than just a vision for the future. It is a blueprint to ensure the preservation of the museum's valuable artifacts and railroad equipment while improving the overall visitor experience. The goal is to enhance both the physical infrastructure and the programming that will attract more visitors and generate increased revenue.

A central element of the plan includes developing interactive exhibits, dynamic events, and educational programming that will engage a wider audience and foster long-term growth. With the anticipated increase in revenue, the museum plans to invest in full-time staff, including an executive director to oversee operations and finances. Additional staff positions such as an events coordinator and volunteer coordinator will help to bring the museum's ambitious vision to life. These roles will be pivotal in securing vital funding through grants and fundraising efforts, ensuring the museum's ongoing success and expansion.
By combining strategic planning with a passion for preserving railroad history, the RGVRRM is poised to thrive for generations to come, offering an enriching experience for visitors and ensuring that its legacy remains intact for years to follow.

The RGVRRM established an Advisory Committee of board members to work with the CDR to facilitate the design workshop phase of the master planning process. Advisory committee members included:

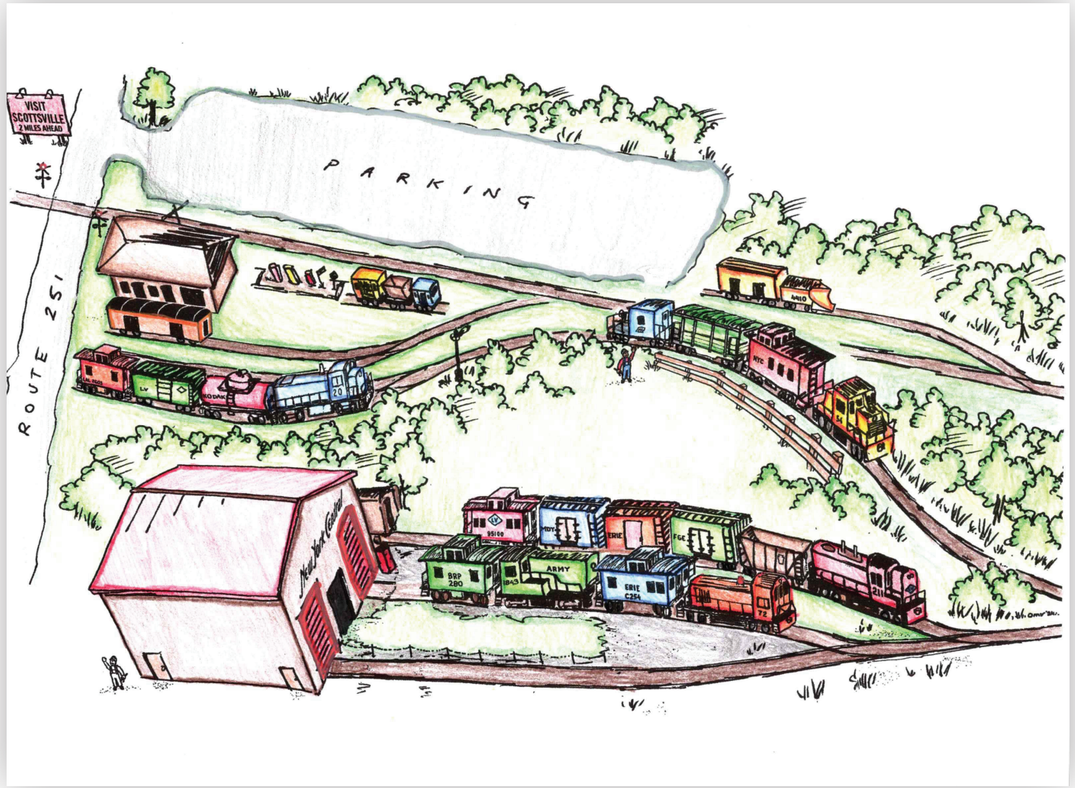
- John Guglielmo
- Dave Kehrer
- Bill Marcotte
- Otto Vondrak, Chairman

Tasks of the committee included,

- Stakeholder identification and Outreach
- Focus Areas (geographic and topics)
- Guiding Principles
- Workshop Promotions
- Event schedule and Agenda

Refer to Site and Operational Conditions section for further details as well as Appendix A4 for Advisory Committee Meeting Notes.

Existing Museum Campus



Existing Museum Campus Map

Industry Depot- Lower Campus

MDT Refrigerator Car Exhibit

Existing Museum Campus

Railroad Sign Garden

Green Space- Lower Campus

View from parking lot looking toward outdoor exhibits and boarding area

Road side views

View from non-public access road looking into Construction Yard

Rail Lines

Private right-of-way of Livonia, Avon & Lakeville Railroad

Volunteer access road to Upper Campus

Restoration Shop

Signals Exhibit inside Mail Car. Sign Garden II Exhibit in front of car.

Train Exhibits- Upper Campus

Freight Train Exhibit

Focus Areas Map

Site Conditions & Focus Areas

CDR met with the RGVRRM Advisory Committee from May 2024 through September 2024 documenting the opportunities and challenges of operating a working railroad museum. Study and Focus Areas were defined that will be used as tools during the Design Workshop process. These tools help in effectively facilitating the collection of ideas from Design Workshop participants. The Advisory Committee and CDR staff carried out a Pre-Design Workshop walkthrough to help understand and finalize these potential areas.

- Town center of Rush is a few miles away with no visitor amenities nearby.
- Town of Scottsville offers better village amenities than Rush.
- The museum aims to build a positive relationship with the Town of Rush for wayfinding signage.
- RGVRRM marketing agency is Travel Alliance Partnership. Marketing agency's goal is to increase ticket sales and revenue.
- New programs aim to preserve, restore artifacts, and support museum programming.
- The business growth has reached a point where it's all that volunteers can handle.
- Annual attendance peaks at 5-7k visitors, with a goal of reaching 10k.
- Fundraising for projects requires skill, time, and dedication.
- Understanding the museum's background and needs is essential.
- Competes with other museums, featuring static displays, exhibits, train rides, and engine displays.
- The New York Museum of Transportation (NYMT) is located at the other end of the museum rail line two miles away, and offers alternative venue.
- No locker room is available for volunteers' personal items.
- A catering kitchen is needed for events.
- Additional lighting is required in the parking lot.
- Safe overflow parking is needed at the 'storage yard.'
- There is a bus turnaround on state land across Rt. 251; potential to unload buses at curb line.
- Handicap and bus drop-off could be aligned parallel to Rt. 251.
- LA&L (Livonia Avon & Lakeville) Rail easement 30 feet in width, 15 feet on each side of track centerline.
- Display train should be located to allow vehicle access to the lawn area north of the depot.
- A shade pavilion is needed for visitor comfort.
- The proposed east access road previously had a curb cut on a neighboring property, but purchasing this land is complicated due to challenging negotiations with the current owner.
- No displays should be placed behind the workshop's south wall.
- The facility is currently on well water, which is non-potable, and requires extensive filtration and treatment to avoid damaging depot plumbing.
- Restrooms will need to connect to a Monroe County Water Authority line.
- A building addition south of the existing workshop could be stepped horizontally to avoid the rails and trains.
- RGVRRM should establish connections with local museums such as Jell-O Museum in LeRoy, Genesee Country Museum, and National Warplane Museum.
- Long-distance train rides are not feasible without partnerships with other railroads.
- NYMT tracks can only be borrowed a few times a year.
- All exhibits require funding for streamlined improvements. Proposed passive exhibits in the Upper Yard include installation of more signs and markers. Proposed active exhibits include enhancement of Signals exhibit for more interactivity. An existing interactive exhibit in the Lower Yard has a red pushbutton to activate railroad crossing lights and bell. More interactive exhibits planned for Lower Yard.

Design Worshop Focus Areas

Physical (2 Groups) Upper & Lower Campus

- Image / curb appeal
- Visitor Experience (Accessibility, amenities, food, facilities)
- Access, circulation and parking
- Maintenance
- Visitor capacity (what limits)
- Volunteer locker room
- Restrooms
- Storage
- New structures to protect train cars for elements / new display barn
- What goes inside and what goes outside?
- Shade and rain cover for visitors
- Building code compliance (types of spaces; public gathering)

Programs (1 Group)

- Rides / restoration / events
- Year round capacity
- Staffing requirements
  - Store
  - Train rides
  - Volunteers / docents to explain history & operations
  - Education coordinator (s)
- Partnerships
  - Blacksmith, telegraph operation
  - RIT Engineering

Exhibits (Story being told) (1 Group)

- Web site, trains, displays, education (what is successful?)
- Depot layout, circulation and uses

Governance (1 Group)

- Operations model (membership and volunteers)
- Volunteers
- Skill sets required
- Regulatory oversight agencies
- Compliance requirements
- Current organization chart
- Budget / Staffing / Expenses
- Marketing and business development
- Website audit
- Social media
- YouTube materials

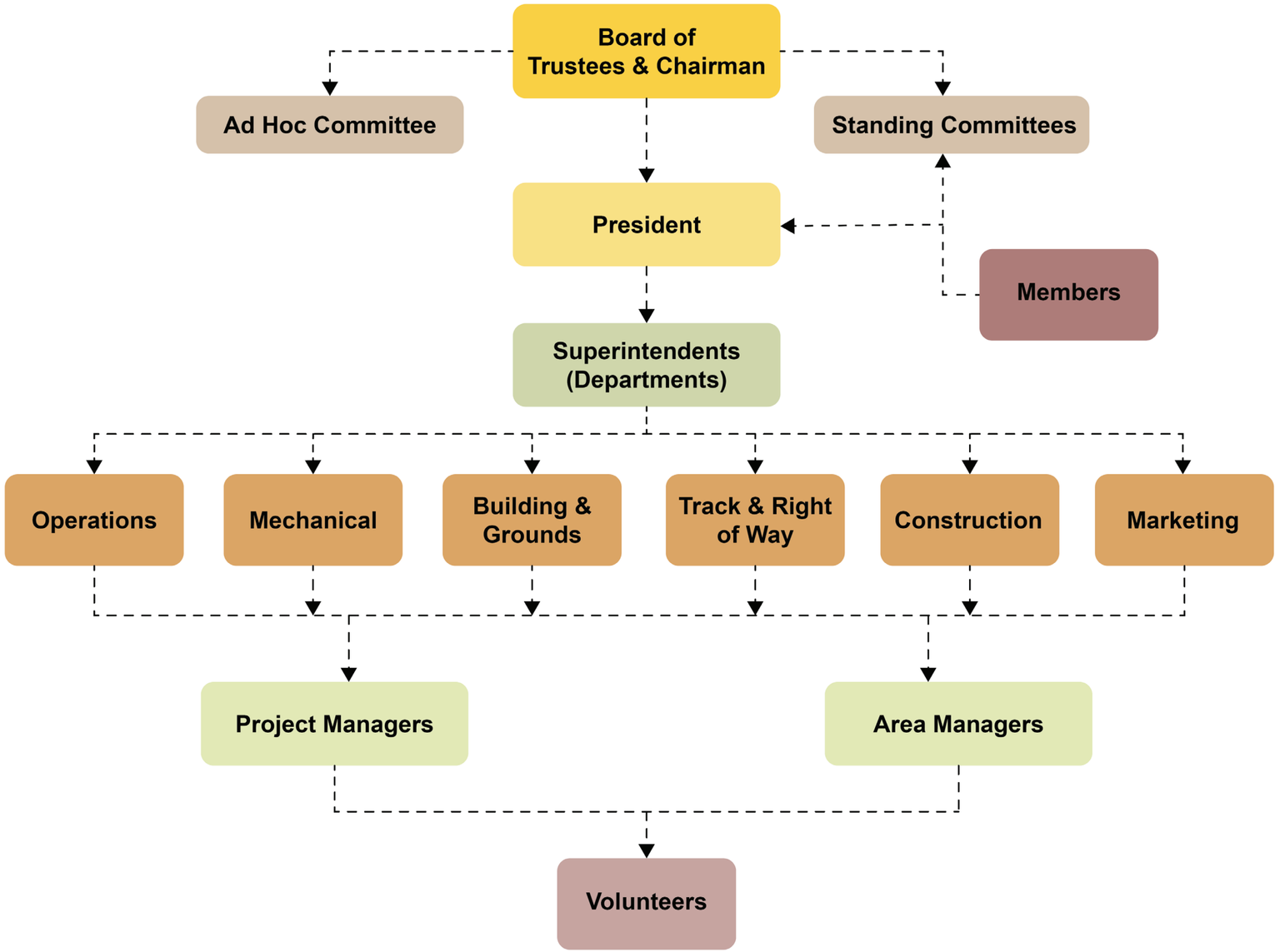
Workshop Promotions

Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum
DESIGN WORKSHOP
Friday, July 12, 2024 | 10am-2pm
282 Rush Scottsville Rd
(Rt. 251) Rush, NY
VISCOSE COMPANY

"TRACKS TO THE FUTURE"
DESIGN WORKSHOP
FRI. JULY 12 - 10AM - 2PM
Help make our museum a better place!
The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum was established in 1971, and has since grown to become New York State's largest operating railroad museum, offering visitors a unique historic and authentic railroad experience. Working together, RGVRRM and CDCR will collaborate on a vision for the museum's future. Join us to discuss creative ideas for exhibits, facilities, landscaping, and other improvements to drive the best user experience for the next generation of volunteers and visitors alike. All aboard!
Please RSVP to admin@rrcdc.org by July 10
Rochester

RGVRRM Current Organizational Chart

1. President
2. Board of Trustees
    a. Standing Committees
    b. Ad Hoc Committees
3. Superintendents (Departments)
    a. Buildings & Grounds
    b. Mechanical
    c. Operations
        i. NYSDOT provides Operating
Authority
    d. Track & Right of Way
    e. Construction
    f. Marketing
4. Managers
    a. Project Managers
    b. Area Managers
5. Volunteers and Members



LEHIGH VALLEY
LV
62300
CAPY 110000 KK
LD LMT 123100
LT WT 45900
LV

Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles

Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum Design Workshop

1) **Equity**, inclusion and sustained collaboration with Indigenous people whose land this is.

2) **Restoration of the natural environment**
   a. Water, land, vegetation, habitat

3) **Equitable Access**
   a. Physical, emotional, visual and economic

4) **Connectivity**
   a. Local neighborhoods / Rochester / Monroe County / Finger Lakes Region
   b. Journey to the site
      i. Travel routes
      ii. Signage, wayfinding, landmarks

5) **User Experience / Placemaking**
   a. Condition of the site
      i. Maintenance (trash & debris)
      ii. Safety, security for all modes of travel
      iii. Creation of site identity

6) **Uses and Character**
   a. Preservation and / or conservation of historic structures, equipment
   b. Building and property condition
      i. Welcoming or restricted access (locked doors, fences, gates)
      ii. Vacant and underutilized buildings
   c. Diversity activities / events
      i. Expansion opportunities
      ii. Program opportunities
      iii. What is missing?

7) **Regulatory Oversight**
   a. Property ownership / easements
   b. NYS DOT Railroad regulations
   c. Building codes

Workshop Facilitators

Acknowledgement

The CDR wishes to acknowledge the following design and engineering professionals who dedicated their time to facilitating the various focus groups at the design workshop.

- Poorva Mirashi (Labella Associates)
- Alex Amering (Costich Engineers)
- Sarah Costich (Costich Engineers)
- Roger Brown, AIA
- John Osowski
- Troa Vimahi
- Dawn Noto

Agenda

Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

Design Workshop

Advisory Committee Meeting

June 13th, 2024 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

Agenda

1) Stakeholders / Invites
2) Event Promotion
3) Workshop Event
   - Tours / Train Ride / Overview presentation (aspirational peer museums)
   - Location / food & beverage / tables & chairs
4) Focus Areas
   - Physical (1-2 Groups)
     - Image / curb appeal
     - Visitor Experience (Accessibility, amenities, food, facilities)
     - Access, circulation and parking
     - Maintenance
     - Visitor capacity (what limits)
   - Programs (1 Group)
     - Rides / restoration / events
     - Year round capacity
   - Exhibits (Story being told) (1 Group)
     - Web site, trains, displays, education (what is successful?)
   - Governance (1 Group)
     - Operations model (membership and volunteers)
     - Budget / Staffing / Expenses
     - Marketing and business development

Misc.

Existing conditions plan

Inventory of facilities and equipment (who owns what?)

1 Focus Group 1: Upper Campus

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Accessibility / Equity

- Step Stool
- Loading passengers with mobility needs – freight like elevator /lift
- Vertical platform lift on a concrete pad – raise freight to a wooden platform.
- Add grab bars that look like pipes on the caboose.

Flora

- Wildflower native seed available on Monroe County Soil & Water Boy scouts, Industry, dumpsters, volunteer for native pollinators, wildlife habitat

Connectivity

- Connect to Rush / Henrietta Info Rochester – Cross promote with existing museums, postcard program, passport program with libraries and "like" museums
- Connect to Lehigh Valley Rail – Trail: hikers & bikers
- Genesee Country Museum
- Generally – Bike groups, Museum Groups, Hiking Groups
- Directional Signage on Greenway trails: 20 miles ---> RGVRRM
- <---- 3677 Miles Tokyo

Parking

- Town of Rush owns property to the west of museum parking lot, known as 'Rush Riverside Refuge'. Currently they are working on a project and interested in the pollinator prospect.
- Add Bike Racks

Focus Group Map Notes

- Signs to Lehigh Valley Trail
- Signage to Genesee Greenway Trail
- Overflow parking on Route 251 need signage
- ~65 parking spots today
- Plant wild flowers on slopes
- Upper Campus 10 parking sports East side of workshop
- Visitor platform needed
- ADA vertical platform – lift at Depot to board trains
- Usual food set up location
- Land not owned between tracks and parking lot.

Focus Group 1

Workshop- Upper Campus

GROUP 1 NOTES

Focus Area 1A: Upper Campus

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Access:

- People with mobility limitations
- Plan for children – especially strollers

Wish List:

- Lift or ramp to take visitors to level of open rail car
- On Board storage for mobility devices (w/c, walkers)
- Platforms along loading tracks
- Sidewalks to loading /unloading areas

Visitor Comfort & Experience:

- Benches in upper yard (additional)
- Visitors should be advised to wear sturdy footwear (no flip flops)
- Shaded picnic area
- Permanent restroom facility
- Small/compact stone in walking areas

Improvements to Eastern Embankment:

- Slope stabilization (boulders, Gabion cages)
- Drainage – Possible storm-water pond
- Fire protection – remove flammable brush
- Appearance – Employ a Landscape Architect
- Improve Storage of parts and materials that are currently along roadway and visible along west side.

Sloping wall- Upper Campus

Upper Campus from hillside

Signals Exhibit located inside Railway Post Office car, new Sign Garden II exhibit and expanded Overlook area in front of car.

GROUP 1A NOTES

CDC COMMUNITY DESIGN CENTER ROCHESTER
RGV RAILROAD MUSEUM
Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum
Upper Group 1A
N
0 25 50 100 Feet
Approximate Parcel Bounds
NY-251 Scottsville-Rush Road
Sources: New York State, Monroe County, ESRI

2 Focus Area 2: Lower Campus

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Mezzanine (Transition zone between Lower & Upper Campus):

- Paved access for wheel chairs & strollers , etc.
- Relationship with neighbor an obstacle - problem
- Do not currently have pedestrian access between lower and upper campus.
- Lift into rail cars for wheelchairs?
- Could we redo the access road to the upper campus to be more attractive or inviting to have people stay for a while?
- Lacking shade
- Utilize parking cars for exhibits or preparing from Lower Campus
- Safe access to parked cars on Lower Campus
- More Landscaping in Mezzanine area
- Don t' get rid of anything – because they are a museum
- 50-60 people on a train at the same time
- Whole cycle about 30 minutes.
- Space the trains so no one is static and bored on the mezzanine side.
- Main signage is currently hidden, how do people know they are there?
- Move fencing for pedestrian safety
- + Planter boxes

Restroom – Gift Shop:

- Accessibility
- Height of soap dispenser
- First bathroom is easier to access, but 2nd bathroom is larger.
- Where do busses park?
- Food Trucks?
- Non reliable concessions – Rails & Ales
- Embrace the junk (relics)

Lookout over the Mezzanine:

- Upper lookout is great! But the fence is too high.
- Interpret the landscape
- How to incorporate elements of the railroad for interpretation.
- Signage point out various points of interest along the track.
- App's for overlying historical images – QR codes, etc..
- Topographical map including Rail to Trails, this railway and the Genesee River.
- LA & L is a working active rail-line.
- NYS Right of Way issues moving people around, along the road is that possible?
- Could we move the old track car near the parking lot to expand it?
- Cannot walk between cars like passenger cars, have to go in one car, go out, then enter another car...
- The landscape is not accommodating to pedestrians (too steep!)
- Could you use a bridge to move between display cars?
- ADA parking spots on the Upper Campus (minimal special guest access thatch not part of the normal parking lot)
- Backyard area has tons of space but where to put all the cars
- 150 visitors a day is a good turnout.
- Add a visitor building in the backyard
- Winter stage in the 1st building

Depot - Main building:

- Not heated in the winter except for staff.
- Need an accessible route to all the areas of the boarding station/ gift shop/ ticket window
- Men's Port-o pot in Upper Campus
- Well water currently (could get Monroe County Water in theory)
- Move dumpster to more hidden area
- More shade throughout the site
- Keep green space open because they do a variety of programming
- "Train Trail" along the access road

Depot:

- Add heat/ ac in building
- Possible pathway along the front of the depot by the parking lot side.
- Photo opportunities for visual appeal
- Train cars kids can play on.

Lower Campus Depot

- Google – trackless trains
- Box of clothes kids could dress up in (with mirror)
- Maps of the campus and also a larger map showing more context – Rail trail nearby, Genesee River, etc..
- Expand gift shop space – expand retail offerings
- "Sponsor a train car "- develop a program to pay a fee to get there name on a restored rail car (probably on a plaque)
- Scavenger hunt that keeps kids exploring and moving through the cars. Get them moving through and a prize at the end.

Tactile interactions:

- Tool display
- Levers to pull
- Interactive displays

Lower Campus- Former train station platform, no public allowed on this side of fence.

2 **Focus Area 2:** Lower Campus

Lower campus train exhibits

Road side views

Train tracks at depot

GROUP 2 NOTES

Focus Group 2A: Lower Campus

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Agenda & Purpose:

- Space limitations and growth within
- Design for families
- Parking considerations
- Safety – How to improvements

Group Discussion:

- Parking across 251 – owned by state
- Do we have written permission to use land (251)? Do we want too?
- Access to NYS School Industry?
- If we grow, we will need additional parking
- Popular Events -across the street used for overflow.
- No formal crosswalk – High speed road - Safety issue
- When there are volunteers on -site they try to patrol crossing.
- Bad line of sight on highway.
- Museum is major asset to the Town of Rush. Town involvement?
- Do we have use of the Town of Rush land – west of parking lot?
- Expand parking lot – move gate north to allow or more parking.
- Improve signage to guide people to RR station " Positive Control Signage" (PCS)
- Fencing – low fence with PCS
- Dumpster

Material Yard:

- Clean up and organize.
- Possible replace with future restoration: such as signals & tracks
- Material yard – Use cars for display

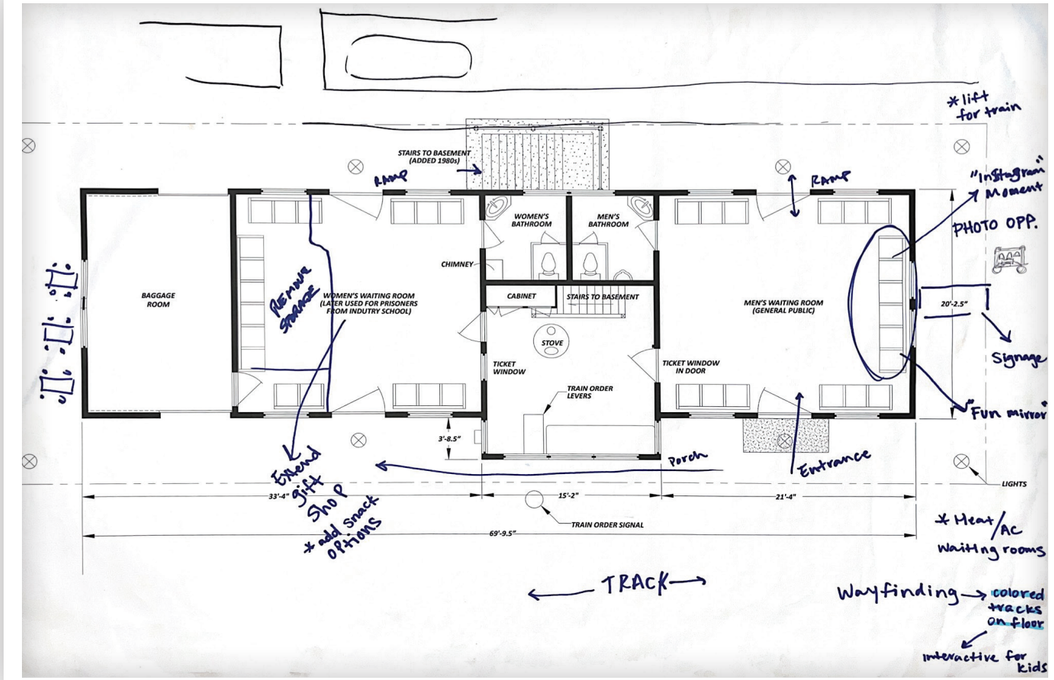
Depot:

- How do we make it accommodating – ADA complaint?
- Ramps (portable) to station
- Make some portion of area brick
- Improve access for walking
- Do we want people wandering?
- Signage is key
- Brick walk way and put to access to train.
- Chair Lift in station and Upper Campus for ADA
- Train Access
- Portable lift or ramps to get on and off trains
- Use brick in area

Security:

- Permanent - Keep Out Sign – No Trespassing
- No climbing trains in off hours
- Fencing in parking lot – looks good, plus signage.
- Positive control signage
- New cameras at Depot and parking area
- Additional cameras to Upper campus
- Dumpster – Used by other people - signage

Long term – more equipment in lower yard building for Displays & Workshops encompassing history, then train to Upper Campus where they can experience it first-hand.



Focus group 2A

Trains at road

Ongoing Clean Up and Organization of Construction

3 Focus Group 3: Exhibits & Displays

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Programming Considerations:

- Cover equipment - $225,000 (low)
- Need a covered space for equipment – protect pieces and enable work / rehabilitation
- 2 exhibit sections
  1) Public –> Total Cover - open air
  2) Private –> Full Cover

Trains & NR.?:

- Need professional fundraising.
- Some grants – DH & RACF – Need more funding
- What about EPF?
- NYSCA?
- What about a member item?
- Largest RR Museum in NY
- Community Service and Historic Preservation grants

Concerns:

- All volunteers – add staffing – Paid Executive Director?

Lisa: We are clear on the fact that we are entertainment. Train enthusiast will never support us. (Because they do not have the money or conviction to defend their passion) Patrons = It is the right length of train ride vs. Enthusiast = Feel scammed in comparison.)

- Safety of visitors with access – perhaps add pedestrian crossing to shorten access
- Expansion of parking – safer crossing to depot
- People have been seen crossing the yellow lines – do selfies on the tracks
- Accessibility – gravel – cars exhibits – ramp access, include ADA ramps , pavement with a NYSCA / EPF grant.
- NYS DOS planning grant capitol? NYSCA

Exhibits:

- Plenty of opportunities!! Increase need for planning and design funding.
- Water
- Restrooms in Upper Campus
- Exhibits are interesting – seek funds for more interactive & digital display (accessible)
- What is your target demographic?

Board of Directors:

- Diversify
- Add: skillset, attorney, accountant – outside council

Notes:

- Have not tapped into financial opportunities we need. A source of revenue – selling of extra train cars – Wayne Historical Society has financial resources
- Grant $$
- Rochester Subway Car
- The LA&L tracks are live – typically 7 days a week, not usually on weekends
- General Rule: Expect a Train
- Who is your larger demographic?
- Need: platform for accessibility (bet expensive)
- Overlook area – Year round use?
- Well water not drinkable – need Monroe County water for drinking
- We are the best kept secret in Monroe County

GROUP 3 NOTES

3 Focus Group 3: Exhibits & Displays

Cars:

- Railway Post Office car- signal display car
- Sign guards
- Refrigerator cars
- Locomotives
- Cabooses
- Baggage car
- Milk car
- Passenger cars
- Stiff well cars

Need:

- Coverage – for operational flexibility
- West side takes the weather
- Increase signage on highway before
- Signage for no parking across 251.
- Idea: Sensory train rides
- Jeremy: We have the plans, we have the cars. You should have a volunteer who is interested and aware of signal systems.
- Occasionally we can get a food ruck – we cannot prepare food – permits/regulations
- “People do not realize it, but railroads? are one of the most paper-intensive business on the planet.”
- Locomotives – we do not have people in the cars except for special events. – use some for storage, parts, signaling equipment?
- The gravel – need blacktop for walking/ rolling.
- We need to access the ties under the tracks ---- gravel
- Shop is part of the experience (people walking around in shop).
- Show movies to create nostalgia.
- Whatever we could get, we got it! But now We don’t have the resources to protect it – so we may have to scrap it.
- Need to focus on “priority projects” – we suffer from the luxury of plenty. We were diluted in our efforts.

- We have plans for saddletank locomotive and use it for display.

- Town of Rush awarded land to the west of museum to the Rush Riverside Refuge group developing a new forever wild park experience.
- Need permeable surfaces – visitor parking – off stage – short term vision move all - off stage
- Remember – prevailing winds from the west, so wall for the exhibit cover?

Focus Group Map Notes

Upper Campus :

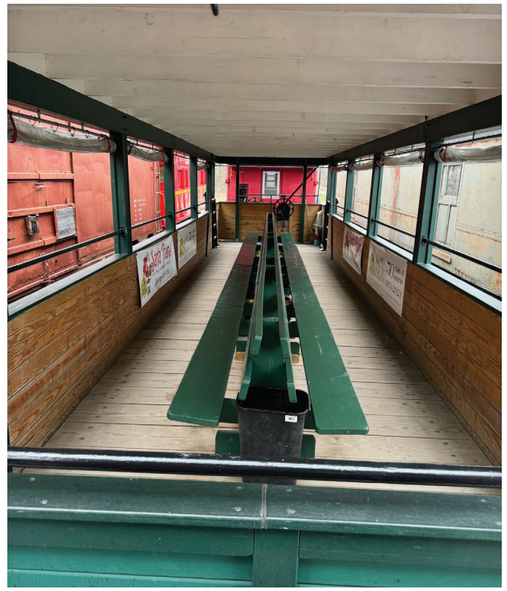
- Note private property on the East.
- New covered platform over trains / tracks to east
- Extend workshop with new closed building in the rear
- Highlighted in yellow are the Reefer & Signal trains?

Lower Campus:

- Brick walkway
- Covered platforms x 2 (1 – for Display Train near route 251)
- Highlighted is the railroad turntable on 251 (landmark on state land)
- 100 acres owned by Town of Rush to the west of existing parking lot Rush Riverside Refuge.

Restoration shop interior- Upper Campus

Baggage Car Exhibit at Industry



The Open-Air Flatcar for Train RIdes

Refrigerator Car Exhibit- Upper Campus

Interior of Caboose for Train Rides or Exhibit

4 Focus Group 4: Governance & Operations

Current Governance & Operations

The operations of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum are guided by the following policies:

- RGV Railroad Museum By-Laws
- Member Rights & Responsibilities
- Railroad Operations Policy
- Collection Management Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Investments Policy
- Youth Protection Policy
- Photo and Filming Policy
- Anti-Discrimination Policy

The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum operates entirely through the dedication and efforts of unpaid volunteers, making it a community-driven organization committed to preserving Rochester's rich railroading heritage. Founded in 1937 as the Rochester Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, the organization began its journey toward creating a museum in 1971 with the purchase of Industry Depot from the Erie Lackawanna Railroad. Since then, volunteers have worked tirelessly to preserve this history for future generations.

Volunteers at RGVRRM

Today, volunteers contribute to a wide range of activities, including maintaining the museum's fleet of historic trains, ensuring the upkeep of buildings and grounds, hosting and operating train rides, and developing marketing strategies and grant applications. With opportunities available for every interest and skill level, the museum also provides training for using heavy machinery and tools.

By-laws

The by-laws of the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum (RGVRRM) define its mission as a nonprofit organization dedicated to educational, scientific, and historical pursuits related to railroading.

Volunteers at RGVRRM

The museum seeks to preserve and operate historically significant railroad artifacts, such as rolling stock, locomotives, stations, and related equipment, while also fostering public interest through educational programs and scenic railroad excursions. The governance structure includes a Board of Trustees and various officers responsible for overseeing operations, financial management, and preservation

Focus group 4

efforts. Membership is open to individuals who share the museum's goals, with clear policies on member responsibilities, voting rights, and ethical conduct. Regular and special committees support the museum's activities, ensuring alignment with its objectives and sustainable growth.

Volunteers at RGVRRM

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

- Partnership with other railroad museums?
- NYMT and RGVRRM are separate organizations with mode of operation differences. 3 joint events a year.
- RGVRRM has12 Board members – elected by 200 members
- Operates 9 months a year
- ¼ budget spent on marketing - $25K/ year
- Trustees: Board terms out this year (2024)
- Marketing efforts – Facebook / Instagram/ RochesterTrainRides.com
- Signage needed
- Future Ideas?
- Charters?

5

Focus Group 5: Train Depot & Visitor Experience

Transcribed Focus Group Notes

Depot: Outside

- Access – for scooters over the ballast is difficult to move (easy to get stuck)
- Wheel chairs on the ballast too
- Paved sidewalks needed
- Access the Depot building south waiting room – built into concrete platform.
- A car designed to accommodate mobility assistance devices, such as an electric wheelchair.
- Lift needed
- Ramp – 1 inch for every foot
- Retro fit old building vs. builds a new building
- Replicate old freight house to original footprint as a new ADA building from scratch.
- Picnic area expansion
- Expand parking further / Flood lands from the river?
- ADA from parking lot on west side of LA&L to our trains.
- Building something at north end of parking by the LA&L and an access bridge over the LA&L right of way (could that take away parking?) 16 x 12 (192 – 200 feet)

Pie in the sky:

- Displays out of the weather
- Exhibits have steps, Depot has steps
- Virtual recordings or QR codes with all exhibits
- Audio experience outside – closed captioning (Talking Statues? Talking trains?)
- Benchmark peer visitor centers – Bethel NY, Woodstock, Catskills.
- Orientation/QR codes to view exhibits
- Coordinate with Dryden as extension of our space to experience the exhibits and our history expand with Kodak
- Do a movie night event to show train movies
- Audio experience inside
- Orientation video welcome, explain railroad.
- Identify members who sign
- Recording about ticket agent office, telegraph, semaphore.
- Children interactive display signals now is one option.
- Old wood in Depot is awesome!!
- Hearing / working sounds!!

Need Land:

- Library for research purposes
- Expand parking west beyond current parking lot
- Farming and railroading farm to market
- How the farmer worked?
- New entrance -> BOCES buildings could be the entrance (new) lots of parking, buildings available.
- Our questions:

  If you were to come here 50 years from now, what would you like to see?

  - Unique history
  - Agriculture
  - Railroad
  - Photography – relationship with Kodak
  - Town
  - Trails
  - River Access

Now we want to be:

- Seen as a travel destination! To learn and experience railroading & railroad history.
- An operative experience that brings together (takes advantage of the land area west of Town of Rush)
- Agriculture education
- Railroad rides
- Railroad history
- Rail fan's ability to host groups (destination of their conferences)

RGV Industry Campus

Sloping wall along roadway

Trains steps

Findings and Recommendations

The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum offers a unique and authentic railroad experience for visitors, members, and volunteers. So how can the user experience be improved to attract new visitors throughout the year. Beyond expanding visits to the museum, retaining, and expanding memberships and the volunteer base will also help to generate revenues. Some of the key findings from the design workshop include:

- Improved visual access from Route 251 westbound.
- Expand parking and provide lighting.
- Provide a safe, well defined, and accessible route from the parking lot to the depot.
- Incorporate a bus drop off zone.
- Better locate identity signage
- Improved visitor comforts including (food, restrooms, HVAC) in the depot and declutter accessible surfaces and lifts into rail and exhibit cars.
- Retain and organize the old artifacts north of the parking lot and along the access road. Expand the public viewing and event space.
- Prioritize protection of trains and historic artifacts
- Expand the workshop for restoration.
- Provide amenities for the volunteers.
- Expand storytelling with new exhibits, displays and programs.
- Increase revenues to hire staff including an executive director, event coordinator and office manager.
- Coordinate marketing across the Finger Lakes region via visitors bureaus, tourism agencies and companies as well as cross collaboration with local and regional museums and cultural institutions.

Recommendations

Lower Campus

Improve visual access (sight distance) to the campus from Rush Scottsville Rd. (Route 251). The depot and

Looking West on RT-251 Sidewalk Toward Depot

trains are screened by the embankment between the road and upper campus storage yard.

Excavate and terrace the embankment back to open views to the RGVRRM facilities which will include a proposed bus pull off lane east of the LA&L active rail crossing. This should also allow a monument sign and parking access sign to be more visible. Visitors can disembark and access the depot on the east side. Widen the sidewalk on the east side of the depot with ADA access to the waiting room.

This sidewalk will access a new ADA lift into the display car next to the depot. The expanded sidewalk will extend to the north side of the depot to a proposed pavilion structure. Improve the entrance and parking; prune or remove trees at the entrance next to Route 251 and relocate the existing storage shed to allow for directional signage, lighting, and landscape improvements. Design and construct curbing, fencing and sidewalks (if feasible) immediately west of the LA&L active line (position 15 feet from the center line). Consolidate stored materials as far north of the parking as possible and relocate fencing and gates northerly to accommodate additional parking. Endeavor to secure property purchased or easement from the Town of Rush west of the parking known as the Rush Riverside Refuge so the parking surface

Train Depot - Lower Campus

can be expanded to 60 feet wide and accommodate a sidewalk keeping most visitors out of the drive lane. Include amenities to the parking area, paving and striping, ADA parking spaces, lighting, landscaping, and signage.

Train Depot

Several ideas were discussed for the depot with the intent of improving the visitor experience while conserving the historic integrity of the building. The primary rooms within the depot include, the men's waiting, room restrooms, ticket office, the women's waiting room and baggage storage. The women’s waiting room currently serves as the museum retail shop (See Detail 1). Three alternatives are proposed to enhance the visitor’s experience.

Detail Scheme 2

1. Retain men's waiting room for arriving visitors.
2. Retain ticket office for visitor check in.
3. Remove the existing restrooms and convert it to exhibit passage with viewing window into the ticket office.
4. Reconfigure the woman's waiting room to a museum shop and exhibit space with limited food and beverage offerings via vending machines.
5. Construct ada compliant restrooms in the baggage storage section.
6. Improve the HVAC systems but retain the old stove in the ticket office for character.

Detail Scheme 3

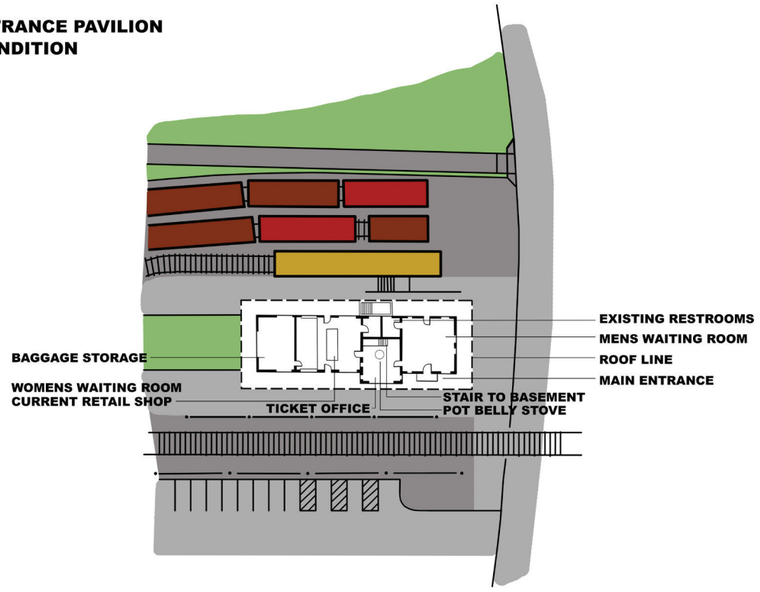
1. Retain men's waiting room for arriving visitors.
2. Retain ticket office for visitors check in.
3. Remove the existing restrooms and convert to an exhibit passage with a viewing window into the ticket office.
4. Reconfigure the women's room waiting room to a museum shop and exhibit space.
5. Repurpose the existing bag storage room to accessible restrooms and storage.

Detail Scheme 4

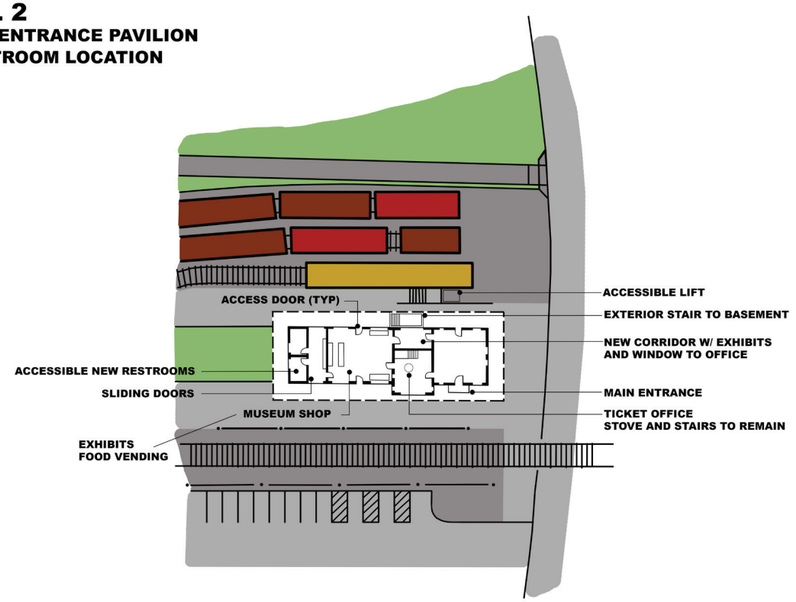
1. Retain men's waiting room for arriving visitors.
2. Retain ticket office for visitors check in.
3. Remove the existing restrooms and convert to an exhibit passage with a viewing window into the ticket office.
4. Reconfigure the women's room waiting room to a museum shop and exhibit space.
5. Repurpose the existing bag storage room to a catering kitchen. This kitchen could be designed to provide serving access both inward toward the museum shop and outward to the patio and pavilion area. This space could include storage space for the kitchen and museum shop as well.

MUSEUM ENTRANCE PAVILION- LAYOUT OPTIONS

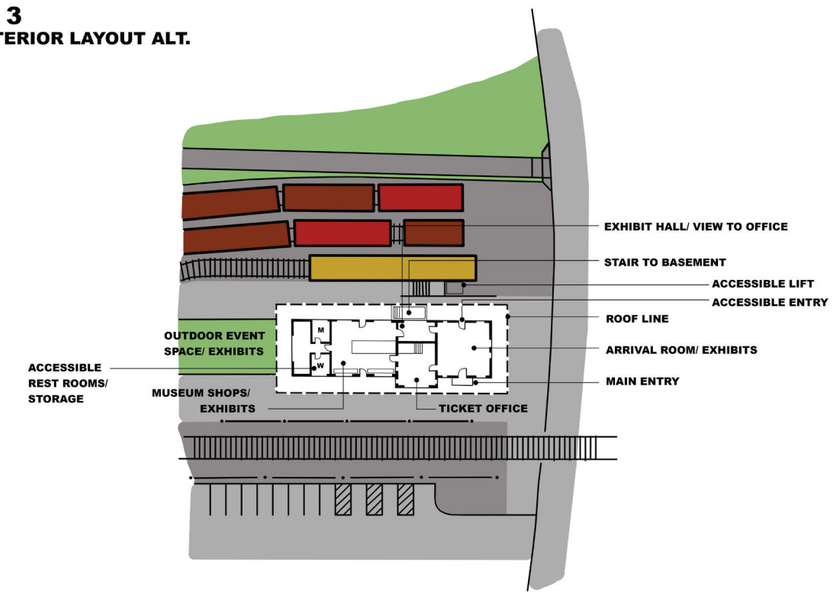
DETAIL 1
MUSEUM ENTRANCE PAVILION
EXISTING CONDITION



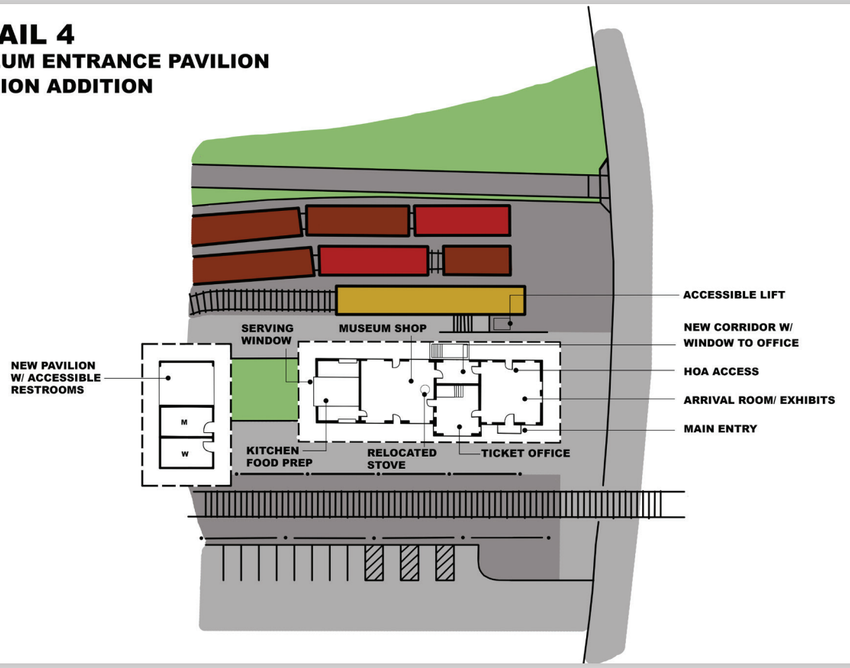
DETAIL 2
MUSEUM ENTRANCE PAVILION
ALT. RESTROOM LOCATION



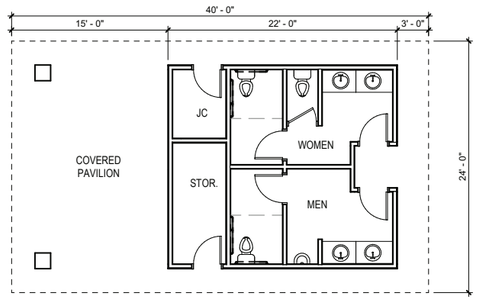
DETAIL 3
DEPOT INTERIOR LAYOUT ALT.



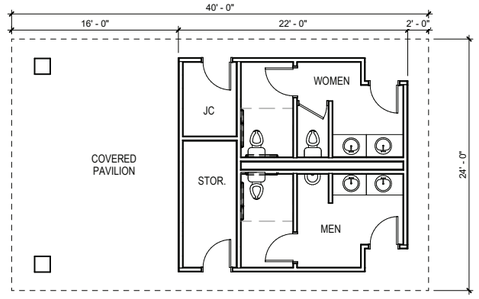
DETAIL 4
MUSEUM ENTRANCE PAVILION
PAVILION ADDITION



MUSEUM ENTRANCE PAVILION- PRECEDENT IMAGES



Restroom Layout- Option 1



Restroom Layout- Option 2

Findings and Recommendations

Lower Campus Train Stacking

6. Restrooms would be incorporated into a proposed outdoor pavilion space positioned directly north of the depot.
7. Improve HVAC systems in the depot and relocate the old stove into the museum shop providing more room in the ticket office.

Lower Campus Site Improvements

Improvements along Route 251 with a bus pull off for visitor unloading has been mentioned. The area between the depot and the display trains is currently a gravel surface. It is recommended that this area be paved with asphalt or concrete to be more comfortable to visitors in wheelchairs and strollers. Provide ADA lifts to access to the display car and the train car carrying visitors to the upper campus. The lawn area (event space) north of the depot and adjacent to the signal display should be expanded easterly to the train tracks. Incorporate area and accent lighting across the lower campus. Several areas include steep slopes which transition from the upper campus, created by cuts to install the original LA&L main line,

Access Drive to Upper Campus. Clean Debris, Organize the Junk, Clear and Grub the slopes, Seed with Wildflower mix.

the depot as well as the museum access drive and rail lines.

Several lengthy sections of slope require stabilizing walls (gabions, railroad ties, jersey barriers) drainage improvements and seeding of native, pollinator wildflowers. Refer to the plans for the recommended location of walls and slope stabilization. Stabilization is also needed at the east toe of slope along the access drive to the upper campus. This access drive should be resurfaced with crushed stone from the sidewalk at Rt. 251 to the gate by the public event space. Install bike racks, benches, and a directional signpost for interest.

Other items recommend for the lower campus include, train or play equipment children can climb on, a map of the campus and local area (Rush, Scottsville, Lehigh Valley Trail, Rush Riverside Refuge, Industry Campus).

Railroad Artifacts

There are three areas of the campus randomly devoted to outside storage of artifacts, tools and equipment.

1. The area north of the parking in the lower campus.
2. Both sides of the access drive from route 251 to the upper campus.
3. East and South sides of the workshop building located in the upper campus including the slopes abutting the adjacent property.

A complete inventory of these artifacts tools and equipment will allow consideration for items which should be kept and what should be disposed of. All materials, artifacts, and equipment to be salvage should be consolidated in two locations: along the access drive and north of the lower parking lot. All materials stored outside of the primary workshop of the upper campus should be moved to make room for volunteer parking, dumpsters, a building expansion, and potential new structure south of the existing workshop. These materials add significantly to the site's authenticity, however, debris and real junk along with dead vegetation and eroding slopes detract from the user experience.

Upper Campus

There are three structures recommended for the upper campus (refer to plans),

1. A shed addition to the east side of the existing workshop.
2. A new work shed South of the existing building.
3. A canopy spanning the display train cars north of the existing workshop.

Upper Campus Storage Yard, New workshade expansion proposed

The shed addition on the east side of the existing workshop is intended to house visitor restrooms, a maintenance closet, volunteer restrooms and lockers, storage space for event equipment or a warming kitchen/caterer's kitchen to serve larger events and gatherings. The new work shed is proposed to be located south of the existing workshop. The intent of this structure is to house train restoration space allowing the

Findings and Recommendations

existing structure to become display space for restored trains engines and cars. There are two alternatives for the additional workshop, directly abutting and connected to the existing workshop or constructed approximately 55 feet south within open area between the two structures allowing some restoration tasks to occur outside. The exact dimensions and configuration of the building design will be influenced by the various track alignments on the west and south sides of the existing building and the number of cars to be stored or stacked in this area.

The restored engines and cars on display north of the workshop are currently exposed to Western New York climate conditions year-round. As a means of protecting these critical artifacts the steering committee and designed workshop participants propose these all be covered by a canopy spanning above the trains and being enclosed by a wall on the west side due to the prevailing winds. This west wall could be a series of glass overhead doors which can be opened and closed seasonally.

Visitors currently access the display cars by steps along the gravel corridor between the trains. Building a canopy structure also allows for a pedestrian platform to be constructed between the cars offering a way to access the cars and creating an exciting event space protected from the elements. Ramps or stairs (with lift) will provide access to all visitors.

The entire upper campus can be a welcoming event space and an exciting space for volunteers. The RGVRRM would like this area of the upper campus to accommodate up to 150 visitors. It is recommended that all gravel areas north of the existing workshop be paved with asphalt or concrete. Rails from the display cars to the workshop should have formal railroad tie crossings. The existing event space at the top of slope is recommended to be expanded as it offers a dramatic overlook of the entire museum campus and the Rush Riverside Refuge (Town of Rush) to the west.

These event spaces will be improved for users with more walkable surfaces, easier access to the trains and exhibits, new restrooms and kitchen space for food and beverage items. Other recommendations for the upper campus include slope grading and native wildflower seeding east of the rails and access drive to the abutting neighbor's property and planting evergreen trees on the slope to the east. Area and accent lighting would allow events to extend beyond sunset. Service and maintenance features including dumpsters and snow storage must be considered in the design phase.

It is not clear if these recommended building improvements will accommodate all storage requirements for important historic artifacts owned by the museum which require enclosed and/or a climate-controlled environment. A recommended early task is to complete an inventory of all artifacts, trains, equipment, tools to assess and program for long term storage.

Story Telling

The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum is the largest railroad museum in New York State and currently provides visitors with an interesting and unique transportation experience. Presenting a compelling story will keep visitors and members returning to the museum. There are so many stories that can be told through displays, digital media, murals, art and verbally. Hands on training can be a means of engaging potential volunteers and docents. A few of these stories of the Industry Depot (historic photo) include,

- The Western NY rail network
- Travelers to Industry
- Rail construction and maintenance
- Local railcar construction and parts fabrication
- Regional agriculture and food production (farm to market)
- Life on the railroad
- Rail transportation and the local economy
- The future of rail transportation
- The history of Rush and the Genesee valley
- Train and rail photography from Kodak (the George Eastman house and Dryden theater)
- The Rochester trolley system

The design workshop identified multiple recommendations for expanding on the existing exhibits and displays to tell the story of the Industry Depot and the regional rail network in new and interesting ways. These recommendations include,

- An orientation video prior to boarding the train held inside the depot or in the new pavilion.
- Describe the communication devices in the depot and across the rail network (Morse code, telephone, Telegraph, signal systems)
- Children's interactive exhibits of signals and how to operate.
- QR codes and/or audio recordings of exhibits
- designs with a choreographed travel sequence through the museum.
- Incorporate working rail sounds (i.e., noon whistle)
- Display of train car types and purposes (i.e., post office car, refrigerator car, boxcars, locomotives, cabooses, baggage cars, passenger cars, milk cars, tankers, and hoppers).
- Images of activities and tasks performed in the ticket office.
- Movie night events with emphasis on train-based movies and documentaries
- Tool display
- Sensory or virtual train rides
- YouTube videos of train car restoration projects
- Rotating or visiting exhibits with peer or aspirational museums
- Rail structures display (bridges, viaducts, etc.)
- Box of typical rail worker clothes for kids to dress in

The planning and design of exhibits and displays should be considered a distinct effort to be coordinated with building improvements and railcar restoration initiatives. The RGVRRM should engage a museum curator or exhibit planner to guide the programming, design, fabrication, installation, and operation of a comprehensive program. When developing a storytelling exhibit and display program it will be part of the consultant's role to identify the museum's visitor demographics.

The RGVRRM specifically recognize the museum is an entertainment and educational venue. Their audience does not generally include pure railroad enthusiasts. Exhibits and displays will focus on visitors interested in the authentic experience but don't have prior education or interactions with rail transportation. Additional considerations include,

- Destination for rail conferences
- Expanding access to the library for research

Findings and Recommendations

purposes, with archives of train design and engineering plans and related documents in the RGVRRM possession.

Special consideration needs to be given to people with different abilities including visual and hearing. Closed captioning, talking trains, and talking statues are just a couple of ways to improve the experience for all.

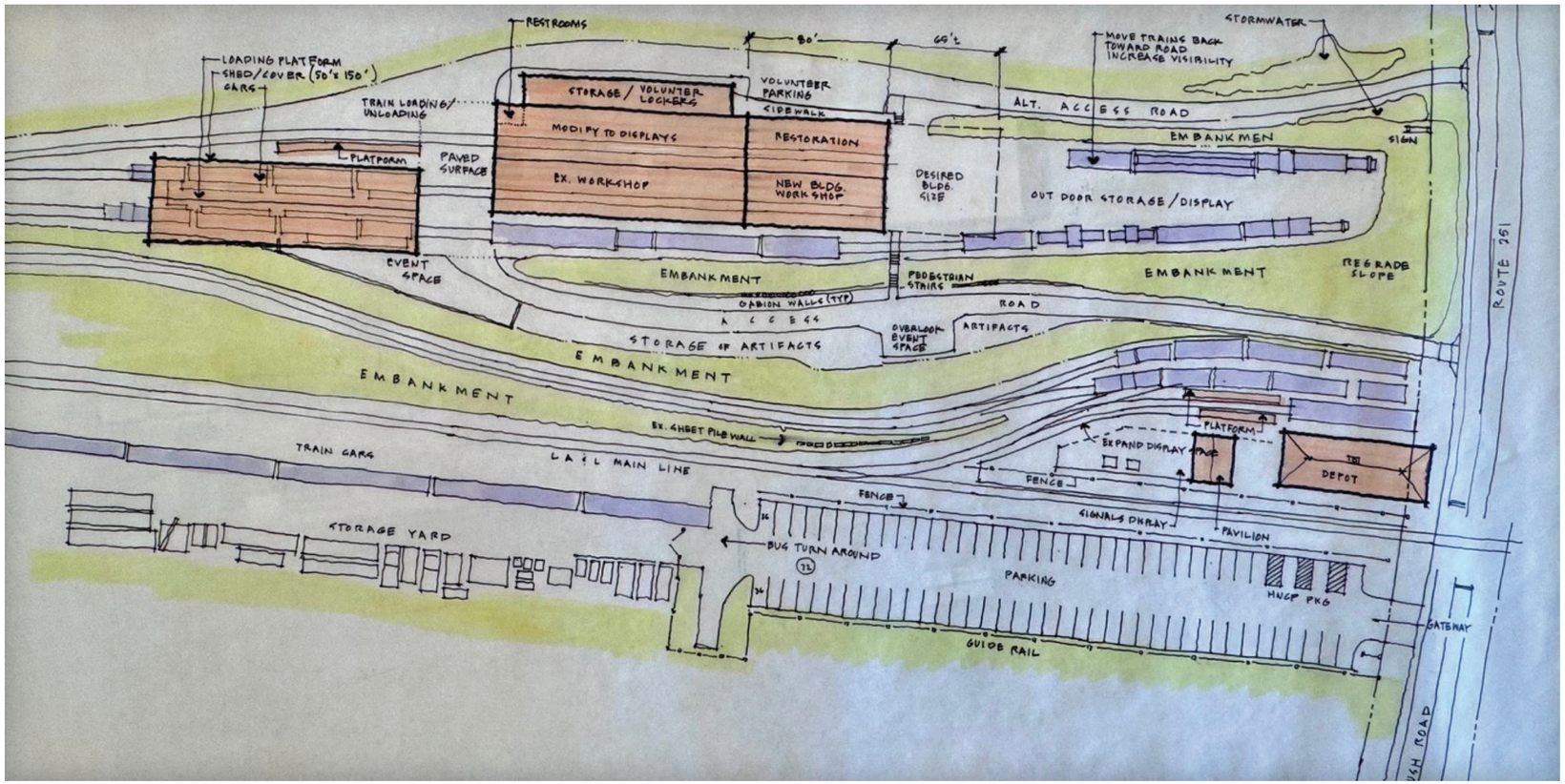
Governance and Staffing

The Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum is a nonprofit 501(C)3 organization completely operated and managed by volunteers. There is a 12-member board of trustees elected by the membership of 200 persons. Refer to the website (www.rgvrrm.org) for details of the museum history, programs and events and governance policies. Their mission is to educate the public on the history, technology, and impact of the railroad industry in Rochester and surrounding upstate region. The RGVRRM history dates to 1937 (members of the National Railroad Historical Society) with the programs to preserve, restore, and operate rail equipment as well as artifacts and documentation. Since 1971 the Industry site in the Town of Rush has served as the base of operations for the museum which has steadily grown while fulfilling their mission. To continue the success of the organization with steady growth the operation and management strategy needs to move past a volunteer-based business model. The stated intent of the steering committee is to increase revenues through visitation, memberships, events, and grants to support hiring full time staff and allowing volunteers to focus on performing specific tasks and setting the strategic direction of the museum. The desired staffing would include the following positions,

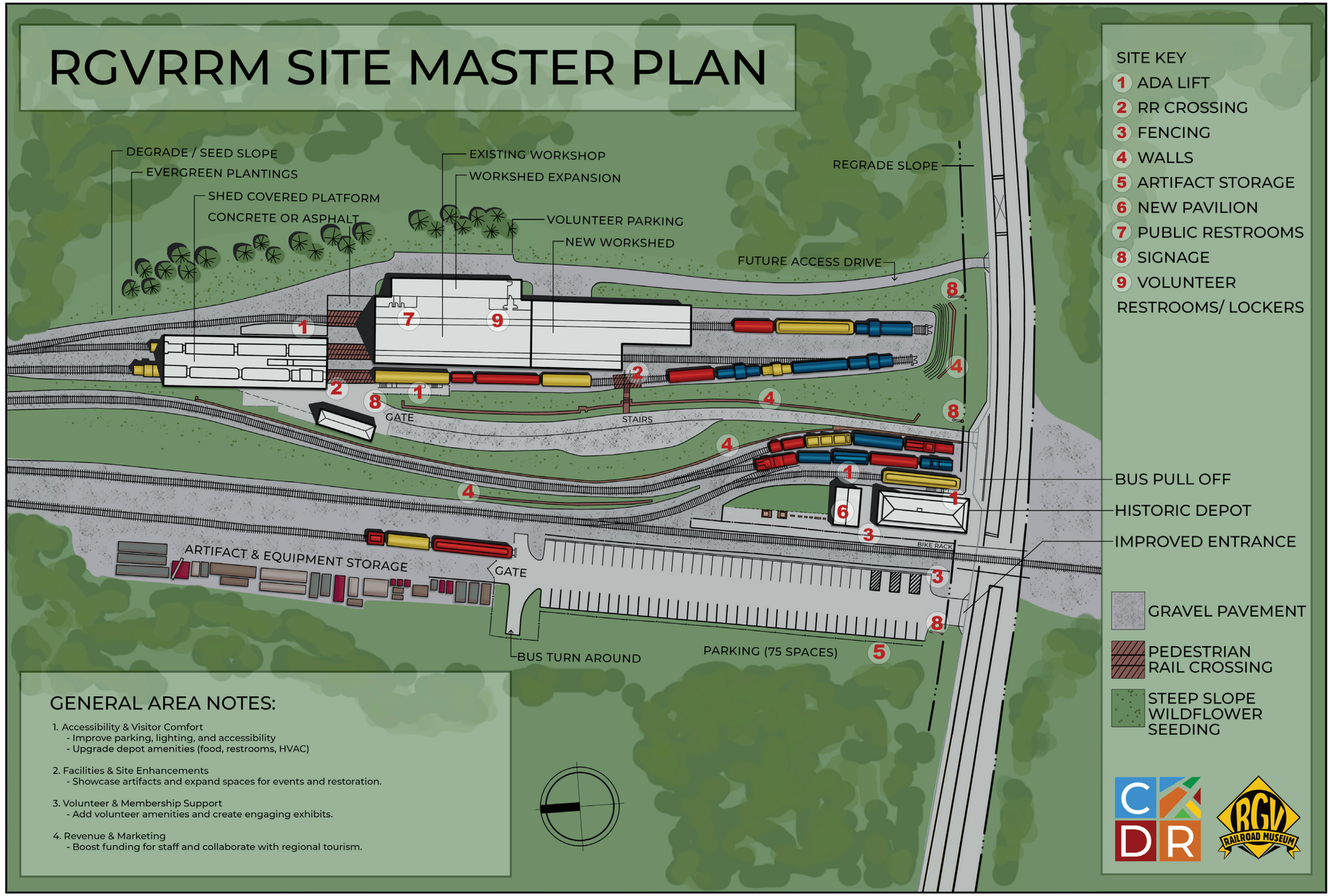
1. Executive Director responsible to implement the strategic plan, manage operations, establish, and monitor an operating budget, serve as liaison to the board of trustees, perform fundraising, manage essential relationships with elected officials, funding agencies and peer organizations.
2. Events Coordinator responsible for annual and seasonal events, routine tours, and marketing.
3. Office Coordinator to assist the executive director and events coordinator responsible for volunteer coordination, memberships, social media, and website updates.

Currently, the Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum has a twelve-person board of trustees with five officers and seven additional trustees. The organizational bylaws can be found at their website www.rgvrrm.org. The bylaws articles define memberships, the board of trustees, elections, duties of officers, standing committees and more. The bylaws will need to be updated to include staff positions, hiring responsibilities, an employee handbook, job descriptions and the supervisory role of the board of trustees.

It is recommended that the board seek to find and recruit members with experience that will add value to the board the desired skill sets including, finance and accounting, legal, marketing and social media, human resources, fundraising and development, event planning and coordination. Potential board members should first and foremost understand and have a passion for the mission of the RGVRRM preferably with nonprofit board experience. Other skill sets mentioned at the design workshop were members or volunteers who know American Sign Language ASL and persons who know rail signal systems.



Proposed Master Plan Sketch


RGVRRM SITE MASTER PLAN
DEGRADE / SEED SLOPE
EVERGREEN PLANTINGS
SHED COVERED PLATFORM
CONCRETE OR ASPHALT
EXISTING WORKSHOP
WORKSHED EXPANSION
VOLUNTEER PARKING
NEW WORKSHED
REGRADE SLOPE
FUTURE ACCESS DRIVE
GATE
STAIRS
ARTIFACT & EQUIPMENT STORAGE
GATE
BUS TURN AROUND
PARKING (75 SPACES)
BIKE RACK
SITE KEY
1 ADA LIFT
2 RR CROSSING
3 FENCING
4 WALLS
5 ARTIFACT STORAGE
6 NEW PAVILION
7 PUBLIC RESTROOMS
8 SIGNAGE
9 VOLUNTEER RESTROOMS/ LOCKERS
BUS PULL OFF
HISTORIC DEPOT
IMPROVED ENTRANCE
GRAVEL PAVEMENT
PEDESTRIAN RAIL CROSSING
STEEP SLOPE WILDFLOWER SEEDING
GENERAL AREA NOTES:
1. Accessibility & Visitor Comfort
- Improve parking, lighting, and accessibility
- Upgrade depot amenities (food, restrooms, HVAC)
2. Facilities & Site Enhancements
- Showcase artifacts and expand spaces for events and restoration.
3. Volunteer & Membership Support
- Add volunteer amenities and create engaging exhibits.
4. Revenue & Marketing
- Boost funding for staff and collaborate with regional tourism.
CDR
RGV RAILROAD MUSEUM

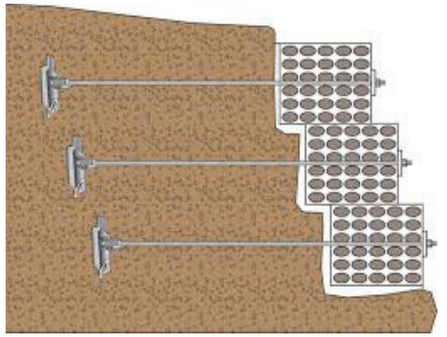
IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Recommendations		
A	**Planning Tasks**	**Notes / Comments**
1	Topographic and Boundary Survey	
2	Utility Infrastructure Study	Water, Sanitary, Stormwater, Electric, Gas, Broadband, Cable
3	Equipment Inventory	Tools, Equipment, Artifacts, Trains
4	Technology Inventory	Hardware, Software licenses, Logins / Passwords
5	Historic Documentation	Depot, Trains, Equipment, Plans, Documents
6	Website and Social Media Audit	
7	Strategic Plan Development	Causewave Facilitator
8	Business Plan	
9	Advance Architectural & Site Plans	
	Site utilities (water service, sanitary, electric, gas, fiber)	Topographic survey required
	Prepare Budget Estimates for Proposed Improvements	
10	Story Telling Exhibit / Display Master Plan	
	Recommendations	
B	**Lower Campus**	
	Visibility and Accessibility	
1	Embankment earthworks to improve sight distance on Rt. 251	
2	Bus drop off lane and sidewalk on Rt. 251	
3	Widen sidewalk on east side of depot	
	Parking Enhancements	
4	Improve parking lot entrance (pruning, relocate storage shed, signage)	
5	New parking lot fencing, curbing, sidewalk on west side of LA&L main line	
6	Consolidate stored material north of parking lot	
7	Secure property from Town of Rush to expand (60' +) parking lot	
8	Parking lot improvements (paving, striping, lighting,, landscaping, signage)	Electric service
9	Define an accessible route from parking to the depot	
	Visitor Comforts	
10	Design and construct a pavilion with restrooms north of depot	MC Water Service Required
11	Expand event space lawn area	
12	Pave (aphale or concrete) gravel surfaces to trains and exhibit cars	
13	Install ADA lifts to trains and wooden platforms at display cars	Electric service
	Site Improvements	
14	Monroe County Water Authority Service	
15	Stabilizs steep slopes with simple retaining wall systems	Gabions, RR tie and rails, Jersey barriers
16	Clear and grub all dead or invasive plant materials on embankments	
17	Use native wildflower seed mix to stabilize erodable slopes	
18	Resurface access drive with gravel	
19	Site furniture	Benches, Bike racks
C	**Train Depot Improvements**	
1	Improve ADA access at east door to Men's Waiting Room	
2	Improve visitor experience per Alternatives Design 1 or 2	
3	New restrooms	MC Water service, Confirm sanitary sewer capacity
4	New exhibits / displays	
5	Improve musuem shop	
6	Add warming /caterers kitchen and/or vending machines	Water, Electric, Gas service upgrades
7	New HVAC system for depot building	Electric service capacity to support
D	**Creative Use of Artifacts - Embrace the Junk**	
1	Inventor of artifacts, tools, equipment (see task A3)	
2	Consolidate artifacts and equipment	North of lower parking area & along access drive

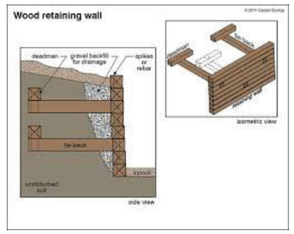
E	**Upper Campus**	
1	Construct a 'shed' addition to east side of existing workshop	Storage solutions, Volunteer amenities, Visitor amenities
2	Construct new workshed south of existing workshop building	Two (2) alternatives proposed
3	Construct a canopy over display engines and cars north of workshop	Include pedestrian platform / event space / electric service required
4	Expand visitor event space, include shade pavilion	Increase visitor capacity to 150 + patrons
5	Construct railroad tie crossing along rails between display cars and workshop	
6	Pave (asphalt or concrete) gravel surfaces north of workshop and event space	
7	Grade slopes east of tracks and workshop / seed with native wildflower mix	
8	Design and install area and accent lighting in public event spaces	Electric service required
F	**Dynamic Story Telling**	Across Lower and Upper Campus and in buildings, rail cars
1	See A 10 above	
2	Design, fabricate and install exhibits and displays	Multimedia exhibits, Orientation video, Interactive displays
3	Miscellaneous	Maps of region, campus, rail network
G	**Governance & Staffing**	Transition from volunteer-led model
1	Prepare or Update Strategic Plan	
2	Prepare or Update Business Plan	
3	Amend By-Laws to include paid staff positions and related HR requirements	
4	Advertise job postings for Executive Director	
5	Advertise job postings for Events Coordinator / Office Manager	Executive Director has input

CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS- PRECEDENT IMAGES AND DETAILS

Creosote Tie Retaining Wall Along Tracks



Gabion Detail



Rail Road tie detail

Gabion Along Track

Timber Crossing

Concrete Crossing

Accessible Lift

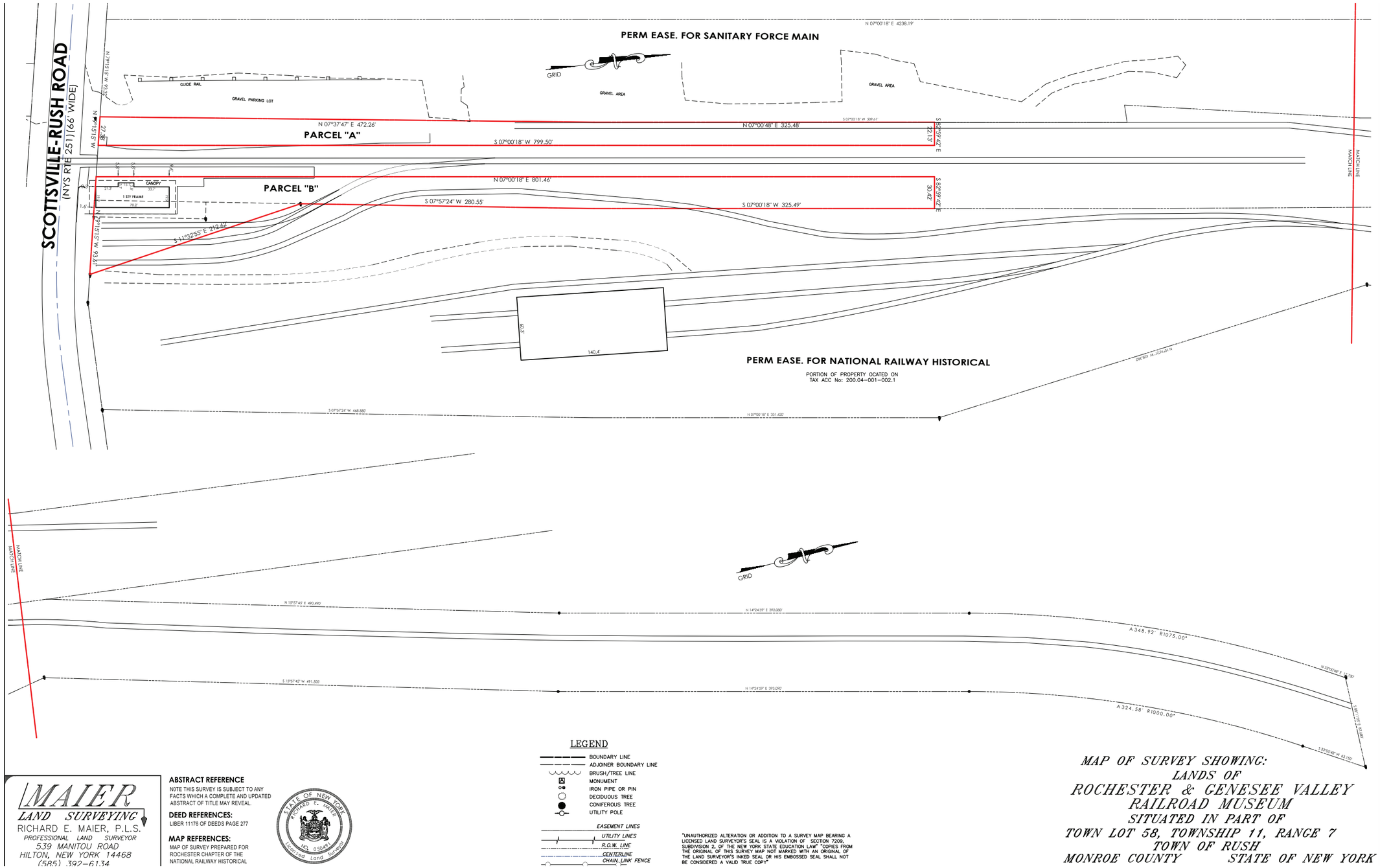
Appendices

List of Attendees (A1)
Site Survey Map (A2)
Lower Campus Industrial Depot Map (A3)
Advisory Commitee Meeting Notes (A4)

Mark Bowen
Roger Brown
David Buckner
Justin Carmona, Mechanical Compliance
Jeff Carpenter
Karen Carpenter
Mikel Colakoglu
Dave Coon
Sarah Costich
Ryan Denberg
Matt Doward
John Frater
Dana Fuelhart, Trustee
Jim Gaylord
Dave goehring
Wayne Goodman
MaryAnn Gunther
John Guglielmo, Stores Mrg., Long-Term Planning Committee
Lynn Heintz
Jim Johnson, Supt. Electrical
David Kaiser, Trustee
Brian Kehoe
Dave Kehrer, Supt. Track, Long-Term Planning Commitee
Diane Keating
Adam Llyod, Supt. Construction
Dave Luca
Greg Lund
Bill Marcotte, Trustee, Long-Term Planning Committee
Brandi Marino
Poorva Mirashi
David Monte Verde
Emma Oakes
Dawn Noto
Karen Ostromecki
John Osowski

John Guglielmo
Justin Carmona
Suzanna Prong
Jim Gaylord
Dave Peet, Treasurer
Lisa Prescott
Emma Quinn
Matthew Reinert
Howard Ressel
Adrienne Turnbull-Reilly
Jeremy Tuke
Lisa Talty, Trustee
John Talty
Otto Vondrak, President, Supt. Marketing, Committee Chair
Rand Warner

Appendix A2 - Site Survey Map



MAIER
LAND SURVEYING
RICHARD E. MAIER, P.L.S.
PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYOR
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HILTON, NEW YORK 14468
(585) 392-6134

ABSTRACT REFERENCE
NOTE THIS SURVEY IS SUBJECT TO ANY FACTS WHICH A COMPLETE AND UPDATED ABSTRACT OF TITLE MAY REVEAL.

DEED REFERENCES:
LIBER 11176 OF DEEDS PAGE 277

MAP REFERENCES:
MAP OF SURVEY PREPARED FOR ROCHESTER CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL

STATE OF NEW YORK · RICHARD E. MAIER · No. 050461 · Licensed Land Surveyor

LEGEND

- BOUNDARY LINE
- ADJOINER BOUNDARY LINE
- BRUSH/TREE LINE
- MONUMENT
- IRON PIPE OR PIN
- DECIDUOUS TREE
- CONIFEROUS TREE
- UTILITY POLE

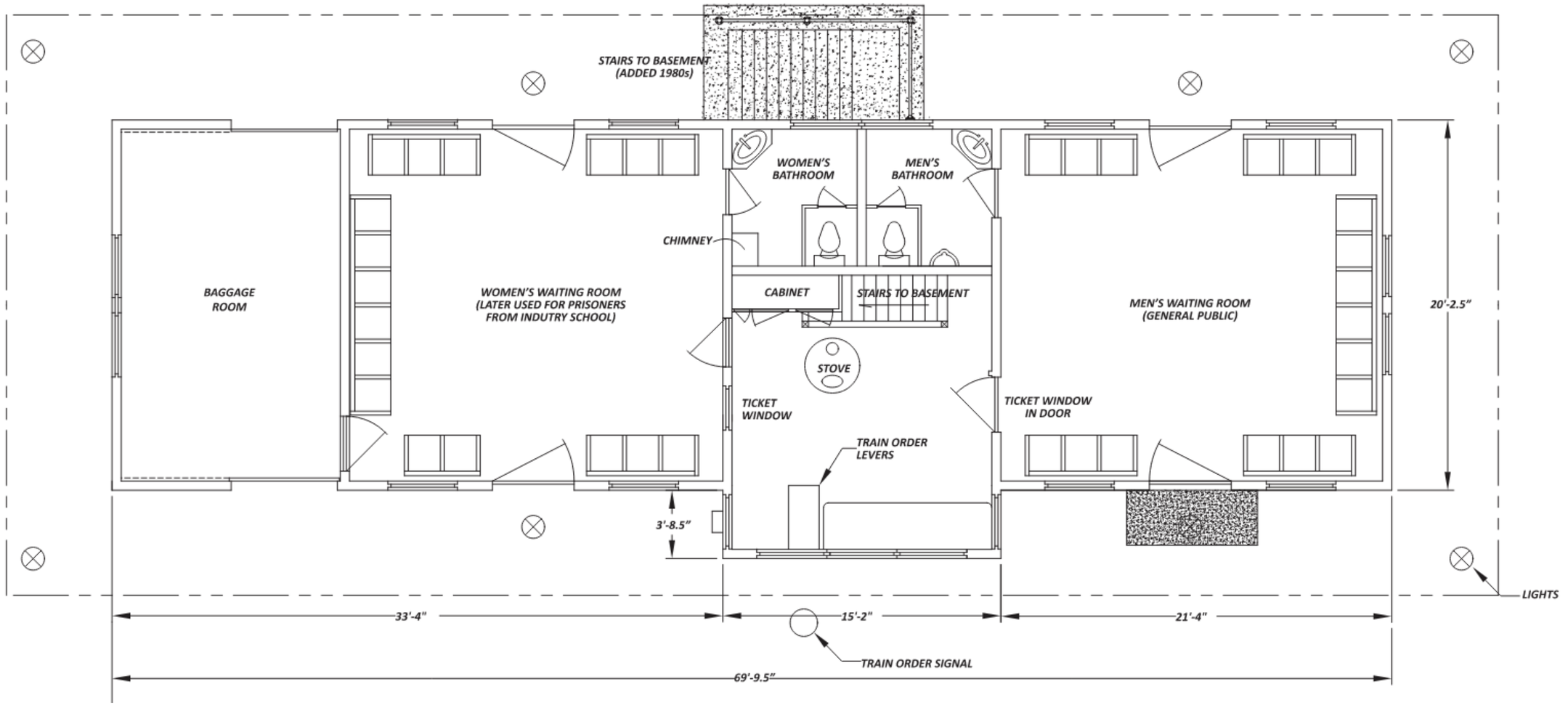
EASEMENT LINES

- *UTILITY LINES*
- *R.O.W. LINE*
- *CENTERLINE*
- *CHAIN LINK FENCE*

"UNAUTHORIZED ALTERATION OR ADDITION TO A SURVEY MAP BEARING A LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR'S SEAL IS A VIOLATION OF SECTION 7209, SUBDIVISION 2, OF THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION LAW" "COPIES FROM THE ORIGINAL OF THIS SURVEY MAP NOT MARKED WITH AN ORIGINAL OF THE LAND SURVEYOR'S INKED SEAL OR HIS EMBOSSED SEAL SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED A VALID TRUE COPY"

MAP OF SURVEY SHOWING:
LANDS OF
ROCHESTER & GENESEE VALLEY RAILROAD MUSEUM
SITUATED IN PART OF
TOWN LOT 58, TOWNSHIP 11, RANGE 7
TOWN OF RUSH
MONROE COUNTY STATE OF NEW YORK

Appendix A3 - Lower Campus Industrial Depot Map



Drawing prepared by Harold

May 6, 2025 – RGVRR Steering Committee Meeting

Zoom – 5 – 6pm

Attendance: Otto Vondrak, Bill Marcotte, Bill Price, Dawn Noto

- Museum back open for season.
- Mother's Day
- Rails & Ales – May 24th 12 – 3pm

We discussed edits to the final report

- Page 6 – Update color – Photo 1 & 2 change out.
- Make Interesting displays – embrace the junk / public viewing only / off limits storage needed.
- Page 26 – clear up chart make larger fonts.
- Otto- Prioritize parking lot (Master Plan #5 on plan) use for overflow parking
- Otto- Depot baggage room – more storage / ? Bathrooms
- Eastern slope has drainage issues – plantings / landscape it now

Revisions to Otto end of May

Present to GVV Board members in July / August meeting then a roll out – promotion of complete vision plan. Board meets 1st Thursday of month June / July

May 23, 2024 – 4-6pm zoom call with R&GVRR steering committee

Attendance: Otto, Bill, Dave,Dawn, John

R&GVRRM board meets 1st Thursday of each month
R&GVRRM membership meets 3rd Thursday of each month
Propose a Steering Committee Kick-off on May 23rd.
Steering committee meetings held on 2nd and 4th Thursday of month
Workshop discussion topics: Governance, Programming, Events, Exhibits
Steering committee meeting in June (13th) to be on-site
Groups to invite to design workshop; Reconnect Rochester, Landmark Society, Strong Museum, RMSC, Susan B. Anthony, Genesee Country Museum
Standing committees at R&GVRM; Collections, Elections, Investment, Ad Hoc,
Current membership is 200 persons.

Museum workshop on Friday afternoon or Saturday?
Stakeholders to inlcude:

- Marketing Company – Break the Ice Media
- Genseee Country Village Museum – close mission to R&GVRM
- Visit Rochester
- Landmark Society
- RMSC / Susan B. Anthony Museum
- Town of Rush
- Historic Train organizations
- Long Time Members (Dave Luca/ Rand)
- Rush Town Historian
- Scottsville Town connections

CDCR to prepare announcement graphic
Lionel exhibit @ Edgerton
Emersive railroad experience – Peer organizations; Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania, Strasburg Illinois RR Museum, Union, Illinois
"End of line" video
They compete with other museums - static displays, exhibits and train rides, (2) engine dipslays – Are we using the space efficiently?
NY Transportaion Museum down the tracks

Otto

- 251 Route curb appeal
- Southern property line – NYS Office of Government Services
- Easement on property
- Parking lot on town property – negotiation with town
- Property to the east is private land
- Future building expansion – Exhibit or display space
- Restrooms at Depot
- Port o pot available
- Visitor comforts
- Paved walkway for accessibility
- Wheelchair lifts onto trains
- Curent bathroom not ADA compliant

Challenges:

- Town center of Rush a few miles away
- Town of Scottsville has better village amenities than Rush.
- Towns do not see benefit of R&GVRM
- Museum wants positive relationship – wayfinding , signage (curren;ty avoiding)
- Website audit
- “Break the Ice” marketing
- Goal is to increase sales / revenue
- Grown the business to point where it is all that volunteers can handle. Need new executive director to grow and manage business.
- Annual attendance peaks at 5-7k visitors – 10k is goal
- Fund raise for a project – skill/ desire / time
- Know the museum background needs

Facilities:

- Depot and Workshop (Upper Yard)
- Catering
- Table & chairs
- Visitor experiences
- No place for volunteers (locker room)
- Bill Marcotte – Dave / newsletter date - monthly

2) Event Promotion

Otto has received email and social media promotional graphics from CDCR
Send invites week of June 17th
Repeat invites weekly to membership. Include RSVP so CDCR gets list of attendees.
Yard signs for event
Posters for depot and misc. locations on property

3) Workshop Event

Train Ride up to shed for event / Overview presentation (aspirational peer museums)
Event in work shed, tables set up by R&GVRM
Coffee and breakfast snack by R&GVRM
Walking tours of focus area (volunteers to join)
Group discussions
Lunch / break to collect plans and notes
Focus area presentations to overall group
Train ride back to depot
CDCR to produce detailed event schedule

4) Focus Areas

- Physical (1-2 Groups)
  - Image / curb appeal
  - Visitor Experience (Accessibility, amenities, food, facilities)
  - Access, circulation and parking
  - Maintenance
  - Visitor capacity (what limits)
  - Volunteer locker room
  - Restrooms
  - Storage
  - New structures to protect train cars for elements / new display barn
  - What goes inside and what goes outside?
  - Shade and rain cover for visitors
  - Building code compliance (types of spaces; public gathering)

- Programs (1 Group)
  - Rides / restoration / events
  - Year round capacity
  - Staffing requirements
    - Store
    - Train rides
    - Volunteers / docents to explain history & operations
    - Education coordinator (s)
  - Partnerships

- Blacksmith, telegraph operation
- RIT Engineering

- Exhibits (Story being told) (1 Group)
  - Web site, trains, displays, education (what is successful?)
  - Depot layout, circulation and uses
- Governance (1 Group)
  - Operations model (membership and volunteers)
  - Volunteers
  - Skill sets required
  - Regulatory oversight agencies
  - Compliance requirements
  - Current organization chart (Otto to provide)
  - Budget / Staffing / Expenses
  - Marketing and business development
  - Website audit
  - Social media
  - YouTube materials

Misc.
Existing conditions plan
Inventory of facilities and equipment (who owns what?)
Topographic & boundary survey
Utility infrastructure audit
- HVAC, water, sewer, storm water, pavement conditions

Rochester & Genesee Valley Railroad Museum

Meeting Minutes
August 20th, 2024

Attendance: Dawn Noto, Bill Price, Otto Vondrak, Bill Marcotte, David Kehrer,

- Add lighting to the parking lot
- Overflow parking at the 'storage yard'.
- Bus turnaround on state land across Rt. 251
- Unload busses at curb line
- LL&A Rail easement 15' each side of track centerline
- Pull trail away for vehicle access to lawn area north of depot
- No need for new warehouse near depot
- Need shade pavilion for visitors
- East access road as proposed on plan was in place years ago with a curb cut on neighboring property. Would have to purchase land to make this happen and current owner has made negotiations challenging.
- No displays behind (south) of workshop
- Restrooms will require connection to Monroe County Water Authority line.
- Currently on well water (not potable)
- Building addition to south of workshop can be stepped to avoid rails and trains.
- Handicapped and bus drop off could be parallel to Rt. 251
- Warsaw Depot may be demolished (brief conversation)
- Connect to other area museums; Jello in LeRoy, Genesee Country Museum, National Warplane
- Museum punch card = free gift
- What reaches different audiences and markets – develop a season platform for entertainment

Next meeting Tuesday, August 27th at 3:00 pm

- Blacksmith, telegraph operation
- RIT Engineering

- Exhibits (Story being told) (1 Group)
  - Web site, trains, displays, education (what is successful?)
  - Depot layout, circulation and uses
- Governance (1 Group)
  - Operations model (membership and volunteers)
  - Volunteers
  - Skill sets required
  - Regulatory oversight agencies
  - Compliance requirements
  - Current organization chart (Otto to provide)
  - Budget / Staffing / Expenses
  - Marketing and business development
  - Website audit
  - Social media
  - YouTube materials

Misc.
Existing conditions plan
Inventory of facilities and equipment (who owns what?)
Topographic & boundary survey
Utility infrastructure audit
- HVAC, water, sewer, storm water, pavement conditions

Rochester Genesee Valley Railroad Museum
Meeting 08/27/24
3-4pm

Attendees:
David Kehrer
Bill Marcotte
Dawn Noto
Sophie Redmond
Bill Price
Otto Vondrak

Train Depot Activities Discussed

- Events logistically are treated the same.
- Time to visit museum = 90 minutes (½ hr train ride up, ½ at upper campus/ ½ hr train ride back then gift shop and lower campus
- Visitor enters South door of Depot to purchase ticket.
- Mingle around Depot until train ride departs – looks at exhibits / displays
- Load visitors on train every ½ hr. 50 people at a time. (50 people on train – 50 people waiting – 50 people returning from upper campus all at the same time)
- Train drives up to upper campus – restoration center and train car displays to explore
- Back on train to lower campus and maybe visit gift shop before departing.
- At times a bounce house on the lawn in lower yard for special events.
- Pumpkin patch, petting zoo food vendors –extend visit time
- Rales and Ales or car shows visit times extended

- Rails + Ales use both upper and lower campus
- Santa train in December uses both set of train tracks. Trolley stop on North end of RR is where pictures of Santa occur then back down to the Depot.
- Attendance – Low = 150 people / Average = 300 people / High = 600-700 people
- Season May through October – Special events in December, Easter - > Christmas
- Princess train rides, Wizards rides, trains and trucks, Pizza Day,
- Rails and Ales, Pumpkin patch 3 weekends
- Licensed themes too expensive.
- Need Monroe County Water to expand food service
- Snack and drinks for sale everyday – extra for events, food trucks need a good sales volume
- Attica and Arcade trips sell hot dogs
- Vending Options – warming kitchen or caterer kitchen?

- Private charter not financially feasible

Need to generate enough revenue to hire staff. Executive Director / ticket and gift shop helpers. Takes 4 people minimum to run museum – 6-8 people would be ideal.

- New programs keep money coming in to preserve and restore artifacts and run programs offered
- Long distant train rides not possible without partnerships with other RR
- Borrow transportation museum track only a few time a year.
- All exhibits need funding for streamlining them.
- Passive exhibits – sign garden – railroad markers – Upper Yard red button display – flashing railroad lights at Depot and train

- Connect with E Rochester train history and other historical museums in the area
- Restoration Exhibits
- Signal Exhibit expansion
- What's the most interesting aspect for exhibits?
- Share connection of railroads industry to our communities
- Railroad carry all your goods- take you to work – vacations
- RR vital to our economy – How many RR cars still travel through Rochester every day

- AARR has all train data – volumes
- Livonia Lakeville Railroad – short line rails – still bring Raw materials to businesses in the area. Cool Whip and Barilla pasta utilize railroad service for their business needs. Corn syrup and flour deliveries

- Washington PA has a trolley museum
- Focus on community and trolley – technology dates back to 1880's

- Exhibits display technology and community history

- Trucks carry last mile of goods – Coal industry – Oil all on rails

- Larger approach to displays 8-80yrs old
- Need private spots for storage items
- Flat track for hand run trains not possible due to slope conditions

Next meeting: Tuesday September 3, 2024 3-4pm via Zoom
Governance and operations = see RGVRR web site for bylaws

RGVRR - Steering Committee meeting

Sept 3rd , 2024 at 3pm

Governance and Operations

Governance

Operated by elected Board
200 members – pay dues each year
By-laws online
Operating Manual in place
No - Business Plan
Insurance regulations to follow
Regulation oversite
Personnel certifications
Annual budget reached by visitation, special events and sponsorships.
Grant vs. Operating Budget

- $100k year from admissions back in 2022 was 20k year.
- Grants and Sponsorships
- Membership dues – renew yearly

Grants pay for portion or all of projects
Grant paid for NYS rebuilding of RR tracks - $280,000K
Department Managers appointed by Board
Could use diverse skill set on board – not just railroad enthusiasts
Connect with local museums and amenities – trails, ales, museums

Governance Goals:
Increase expertise needed on board –
Updated business plan with master plan
Insurance for operating Railroad and volunteer insurance payment every year = $25k

Regulations:
Federal Government Railroad Division
NYS regulates business – NYS DOT inspections
Personal certifications – DOT supervised for train crews
Authorized to work on electric – Certified Electricians
Authorized to work on radio / signals = Radio Engineers
Heavy Equipment operators – certified operators

Operations

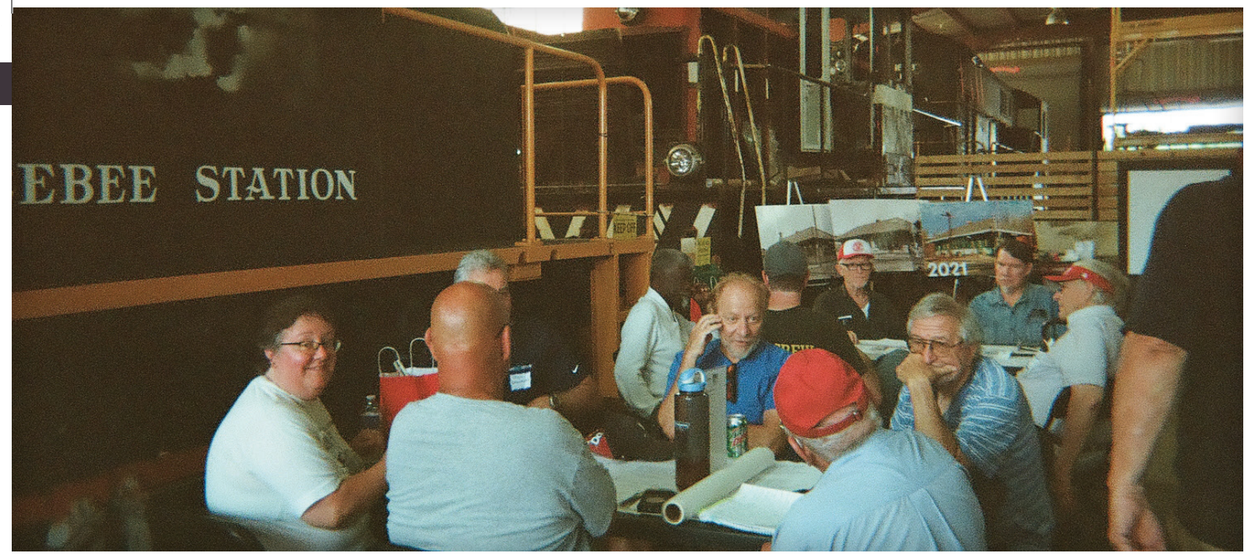
- Operating Department –
- Building and Grounds Department
- Track & ROW Department
- Events & Marketing Department

Safety Manager:
Trains volunteers annually
Train operators get additional safety training
Fire Marshall Inspections
Check off / Sign off list
Proper storage of flammables
Ladder inspections
Not reviewed by OSHA – all volunteers – no employees
No ADA compliant bathrooms
Need Monroe County Water for bathrooms and food service

Construction Department:
Equipment Inventory list needs to be updated – in service, out of service.
Repair costs have risen
Good at project management – restorations
Hard to get volunteers trained and then to stay interested

Operation Goals:

Topographic map of property needed
Grant for manual lift onto rail cars needed
Have outgrown growth areas and engagement
Outline steps of improvements –Phase I – Phase II etc..


EBEE STATION
2021

TRAIN CREW

RAILROAD CROSSING
LOOK OUT FOR THE CARS
LEHIGH VALLEY
A95 100

B&O
C2493

R
R

KEEP OFF
1971

Quality
Since
1880
HOT DOGS
ITALIAN SAUSAGES

LEHIGH